Group has pointed out that the underlying causes of agricultural indebtedness are stagnation in agriculture, production and marketing risks, institutional vacuum and lack of alternative livelihood opportunities in terms of off-farm employment. The recommendations of the Expert Group can be categorised under the following five major heads:

(i) Immediate Credit Measures

(ii) Financial Architecture

(iii) Institutional Architecture

(iv) Risk Mitigation Measures

(v) Other Measures

The Expert Group has *inter alia,* recommended re-schedulement of loans and waiver of interest in case of farmers affected by natural clamities and crop failure in case of rainfed areas with interest waiver to be shared by the Central and State Governments.

The Report of the Expert Group is under examination of the Government.

Prevention of circulation of fake currency notes

52. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether RBI has recently asked all the banks to take stringent measures for prevention of circulation of fake currency notes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the circulation of fake currency notes have jeopardised the economy of the country;

(d) if so, to what extent the economy has been affected by circulation of fake currency; and

(e) the manner in which the circulation of fake currency in the country is likely to be checked?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported that all the Currency Chest maintaining branches have been equipped with Note Sorting Machines which detect the counterfeits. Instructions have been issued to banks to ensure that only sorted and examined bank notes are put into circulation through their counters and ATMs. Banks have also been advised to strengthen the checks and safeguards both during the processing as well as transport of banknotes to ATMs and payments made at their counters.

(c) to (e) In this regard no specific survey has been conducted by the Government. Steps taken by Government/RBI to check the circulation of counterfeit notes, *inter-alia,* include:—

(i) Additional of new/additional security features to bank notes.

(ii) Greater coordination by the Reserve Bank with the investigating agencies like the Intelligence Bureau and the Central Bureau of Investigation as well as State Police Authorities for concerted action against the counterfeiters.

(iii) Training Programmes for detecting counterfeit currency are regularly undertaken by RBI.

(iv) RBI has also initiated the process of installing Note Sorting Machines at bank branches (a) having large cash transactions (b) located along international border areas and (c) where large number of counterfeits have been detected frrequently.

(v) Display of posters on 'Know Your Bank notes' by bank branches for the benefit of the customers.

Sick Public Sector units in country

53. DR. V. MAITREYAN: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of sick Public Sector Units as of today;

(b) the total estimated losses of these units during the last three financial years, unit-wise;

(c) the steps being taken to revive these units;

(d) whether Government is proposing the disinvestment route to reduce the burden on the exchequer to maintain and run these sick Public Sector Units; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV); (a) Based on the Public Enterprises Survey 2005-06, 75 CPSEs were identified as sick for making reference to the Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE). Proposals in respect of 58 cases have been referred to BRPSE by different Ministries. BRPSE has made recommendations in respect of 50 CPSEs.

(b) A list showing profits/(-) losses of 75 sick CPSEs for the last three financial years, is given in the Statement (*See* below).

(c) The Government constituted the Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE) as a part-time advisory body to advise the Government *vis-a-vis* the strategies, measures and schemes for strengthening, modernization, revival and restructuring of sick and loss making CPSEs.

Based on the recommendations of BRPSE, the Government have approved revival of 28 CPSEs and closure of 2 CPSEs involving a total assistance of Rs. 8430.48 crore (i.e. cash assistance of Rs. 1976.13 crore and non cash assistance of Rs. 6454.35 crore).

(d) and (e) National Common Minimum Programme of the Government stipulates that the Government is committed to a strong and effective public sector whose social objectives are met by its commercial functioning and while every effort will be made to modernize and restructure sick public sector companies, chronically loss making companies will either be sold-off, or closed, after all workers have got their legitimate dues and compensation.

Based on the recommendations of BRPSE, sick and loss making CPSEs such as NEPA Ltd., HMT Bearings Ltd., Richardson & Cruddas Ltd., Tungabhadra Steel Products Ltd., British India Corporation Ltd., HMT Machine Tools Ltd., Central Inland Water Transport Corporation and Tyre Corporation of India Ltd. have been identified by the Government for revival through joint venture.